

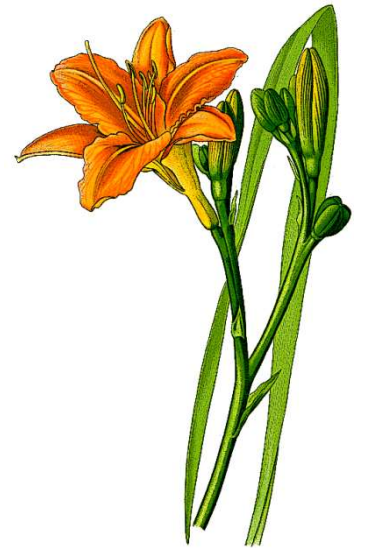
South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the Month at 6:30

First United Church of Christ, Schuylkill Haven

www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com

www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com



Cultivating the Community Newsletter

Weather Folklore: Folklore for the Season. Heavy September rains bring drought. September dries up ditches or breaks down bridges. September blow soft, till the fruit's in the loft. Married in September's golden glow, smooth and serene your life will go.

September Gardening

The garden may be winding down, but there's still plenty left to do!

- Correct any soil deficiencies you've noticed; healthy soil is crucial to healthy plants.
- Compost should be watered during dry periods so that it remains active.
- Onions are nearly ripe when the tips of the leaves turn yellow.
- Fall is the time to plant garlic. Got your cloves ready?
- Sunflower seeds are best dried while still in the plant.
- If you're running out of ideas on where to store your crops, try using a root cellar.

September 21, 2021 meeting will be

held at First United Church of Christ off Route 61 at 6:30 pm. The program will be Cynthia Barbedette with "Iron Gall Ink" – ink made from galls that grow on oak trees – not the leaves. Leave with ink and quill.

- Bring a sampling of your fall flowers – no special arrangement necessary.

- Refreshments for September are by Bernie Francaviglia, Joan Medlinsky, Helen Moyer and Pat Wishousky. – Jane



Scholarship Awarded

The 2021 South Schuylkill Garden Club Scholarship recipient is Maris Kilgus. Maris is a student at Susquehanna University and is going into ecology and business management. Of special note is that she became a member of the Garden Club. It was unusual for a club member to have ever received the scholarship! Maris served a summer-long internship with the Schuylkill Conservation District. Her intention is to use the funds to help pay for textbooks and college expenses.

Annual District Meeting

Mark Monday, September 13, 2021, on your calendar for a day in Bethlehem. The District II/III Annual meeting will be in Historic



Hotel Bethlehem with a walking tour of the Miller's House Gardens and a design presentation by Darcie Garcia, creator of Philadelphia Flower Show designs. Of course, after is the opportunity to walk the historic Main Street for sightseeing and shopping. A section of hotel rooms is even reserved for those who may wish to make it a day or two. Conference cost is \$44.

Turn in your registration by September 6th. Treat yourself to a nice time. – Jane

Welkinweir Historical Tour set for September



2, 2021 will travel from Giant parking lot at 8:30 am and carpool to Welkinweir in Pottstown for a two hour guided arboretum tour with

meadows and woodlands. After a stop for lunch, the group will proceed to Keystone Wildflowers for purchase or viewing of native plants. Return by 5:00 pm. Cost of tour is \$10.

Contact Pat Wislousky with interest at 570-691-4320. - Jane

Sunflowers It is time to check out sunflowers. Consider Second Mountain Sunflowers north of Orwigsburg at 324 Second Mountain Road. \$10 a bundle and a fun time. Other fields abound.-Jane

Schuylkill Haven Borough Day on Saturday,

September 25, 2021, is a good opportunity to show the community the various interests of the club. Jams and jellies, fall dry arrangements, rolled bees wax candles and spring bulbs for the future will fill the tables. Thanks for your time in making this a comeback day. -Jane

Additional notes on Haven Borough Day.

Interested club members will be meeting at Kim Morgan's house (1537 Panther Valley Road, Pine Grove, PA 17963) on September 21 at 3:30 PM. The purpose is to make to sell at Boro Day those Door Decorations like the ones from last fall using natural dried material. (See photo below). From Kim's house we will travel to Haven Railroad Station to decorate the Station for Boro Days and then on to our Monthly Meeting at the Church on 61.



Dalia in bloom



Spiders are Wondering



Call this one volunteers as were not planted



Please Share photo from your gardens.
Email photo to: kamorgan11@gmail.com
or text to 5706179620.

So, I started this list below and I would love if all of you experienced gardeners would send me your ideas of “*You know you are a Gardner when . . .*” Let us keep the ideas flowing and add to the list. Let us see how many ideas we can come up with. Just email your ideas to me at kamorgan11@gmail.com or text it to me at 5706179620

You know you are a Gardner when:

- Your gardening gloves fall out of the car door
- You have gardening tools in trunk of your car
- You develop community gardens
- Your gardens are themed
- You weed your neighbors’ gardens

- You dead head your daughter’s flowers
- You empty the dehumidifier and use the water to water your potted plants
- You sprinkle your son’s hair from a recent haircut around your plants to keep the deer away
- Pull weeds in public gardens
- Carry a small set of pruners in your back pocket
- *You are constantly checking the weather report*
- *You plant by the phases of the moon*
- You know you are a gardener when _____.

Do all tomatoes ripen after picked?



Multiple factors impact tomatoes ripening when picked before their prime ripeness. A few factors to consider:

1. **Large, round** tomatoes will ripen off the vine; cherry tomatoes less likely.
2. Pick **mature** to ripen. Mature is when the jelly coating has formed on the seeds inside.
3. The **ripening stage** of a mature tomato will determine how quickly the tomato will ripen; the more blush or pink the less time to ripen.
4. **Ethylene** is a gaseous plant hormone to help ripen tomatoes and germinate seeds. Green tomatoes have the least amount of ethylene and benefit from being placed in a bag with a banana or apple to stimulate ethylene production. More ripe tomatoes have sufficient ethylene to ripen on their own.
5. Tomatoes ripen best between 60 – 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Warmer **temperatures** can stiffen ripening. Be cautious of placing tomatoes to ripen on a sunny window ceil.
6. **Darkness** is helpful in ripening tomatoes. Place fruit of similar ripeness together in a bag; try not to have fruit touch and make sure they are dry.

Extracted from Empress of Dirt - Jane

Zinnias for the Home Garden

Zinnias bloom all summer long and attract pollinating insects, especially butterflies.



Photo credit: MrGajowy3 from Pixabay

Zinnias (*Zinnia* spp.) are one of the most popular, easy to grow, flowering annuals for gardens. Native to Mexico, the southwestern U.S., Central and South America, they belong to the Aster family.

The plants were brought to Europe in the 18th century and were first described by Dr. Johann Gottfried Zinn for whom they were named.

However, zinnias did not become widespread until the 1920s when they were popularized for gardens because they came in so many different colors.

Of the seventeen known species, *Zinnia elegans* and *Z. angustifolia*, are the two best appreciated for their ornamental characteristics.

Z. elegans is the most extensively cultivated for annual garden use. Plants typically grow 1 foot to 3 feet tall on upright, hairy, branching stems with coarse leaves and large flowers.

Z. angustifolia is a low-growing type used in hanging baskets, borders, and containers, as well as mass plantings. Their leaves are small and narrow and size ranges from dwarf (6 inches) to tall (3 feet). The Profusion and Zahara series are popular hybrids of these two species.

The creation of hybrids and cultivars allows home gardeners many choices in flower styles, colors, shapes and sizes. Most varieties are prolific bloomers, and flower continuously from summer to frost. This long bloom season makes them excellent for landscape color in mixed plantings or for cutting gardens.

Zinnias are one of the best annuals for attracting pollinators, especially butterflies. Interplant zinnias between rows of vegetables or as a border around vegetables to attract more pollinators to your garden.

There are a few guidelines available for attracting butterflies to your yard using zinnias. Generally, the taller varieties are better than dwarf or compact cultivars, and those with wide, flat blooms provide a larger landing surface. Flowers should have prominent yellow centers (disc floret); double bloom varieties make it difficult for butterflies to access nectar.

It is also possible that some varieties attractive to butterflies produce a larger quantity of and/or better-quality nectar than others. A few of the suggested zinnias to grow in a pollinator garden include: Zahara, Benary's Giant, Tall State Fair, California Giant, Cut and Come Again, and Lilliput. One dwarf variety, Dwarf Profusion, has also been found to attract butterflies.

Butterflies commonly attracted to zinnias include swallowtails (*Papilio* spp.), monarch (*Danaus plexippus*), painted and American ladies (*Vanessa cardui*, *V. virginensis*) and red admiral (*V. atalanta*).

Zinnias are low maintenance beauties that prefer full sun (at least six hours/day) and tolerate many soil types and conditions. Because they originated in arid regions, they love hot weather and are drought tolerant but should be watered regularly.

Plantings should be fertilized at least twice during the growing season using a balanced granular or water soluble 20-20-20 fertilizer or a slow release fertilizer at the time of planting.

Give each plant plenty of space when setting them out as the hairy stems of zinnias are susceptible to powdery mildew. The mildew will cause a dull,

whitish coating on the leaves and stems. Watering in the morning and at the base of the plant will reduce the incidence of mildew. There are also mildew-resistant varieties.

Deadhead (remove spent flowers) regularly to extend the bloom time. Allow each plant to grow into its natural side-branching form to shade out weeds.

No matter what type of zinnias you choose to grow, or how you choose to grow them you will be rewarded with a bold, colorful flower garden full of blooms to enjoy all summer long.

Mary Alice Koeneke

Master Gardner Butler County

Stay Safe by staying socially separated from others by at least 6 feet. Wash hands frequently and above all do not touch your face, but with clean hands.